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John C. Freund

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REVEAL BOK AS THE SECRET HELPER OF PHILADELPHIA FUND

Quaker City Amazed On Learning Identity of Man Who Kept Orchestra On Its Feet During War Years—Story Made Public in Advance Sheets of Editor's Biography to be Published This Month—Other Philanthropies of Similar Nature Disclosed

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 4.—The "unknown donor" whose benefactions of a quarter of a million dollars literally financed the Philadelphia Orchestra over the lean "war years" when musical and other domestic enterprises naturally suffered on account of the demands made on the cheerful givers and liberal citizens by the numerous war philanthropies, was Edward William Bok. Musical Philadelphia, astounded at the revelation of the identity of the mysterious anonymous benefactor, who has been thanked for his generosity by formal minutes at each annual meeting since 1916, has not yet recovered from its surprise and also its chagrin at having been such a poor "guesser." The secret came out through receipt in Philadelphia of advance proofs of a noteworthy autobiography, "The Americanization of Edward Bok," which Charles Scribner's Sons are to publish this month, the fiftieth anniversary of the arrival on America's hospitable and hopeful shores of an immigrant boy from the Netherlands, whose industry and intelligence during half a century has evolved Edward William Bok, journalist, editor, publicist, citizen, American in the best sense of the word.

One of the chapters of his autobiography is rich in material for the music lover, giving Mr. Bok's reminiscences of his musical evolution from a much occupied business man with a liking for music but no special knowledge or aptitude for it, to a connoisseur of the best in symphonic and operatic compositions and performances. Mrs. Bok from the early days of the Philadelphia Orchestra was interested in its development and through her, both her father and husband became interested in its development into a great community organization rich in inspiration and fertile in public culture. Both Mr. Curtis and Mr. Bok became members of the Board of Directors and on occasion officers of the Orchestra Association.

Mr. Bok describes his study of the financing of the orchestra mainly through the large contributions of a small group of public spirited persons and smaller sums from less opulent music lovers, as a supplement to the annual subscriptions and seat sale, which by no means covered the yearly budget of expenses. He saw that permanence depended on a sounder business arrangement minus annual appeals for footing the deficit and superhuman endeavors of the ever-faithful women's committees in Philadelphia and its environs. He felt that the true solution of the problem lay in the establishment of an endowment fund, deeming this better than the current group footing of deficits each year or subsidy by a single individual, as in the New York Symphony and the Boston Symphony. He therefore developed a plan, with the co-operation of Alexander Van Rensselaer, and one other di-



Photo by Apeda Studio

CECIL BURLEIGH

Probably the Best Known and Most Gifted of American Composers for the Violin, Mr. Burleigh Is Also a Splendid Interpreter of His Own Music. He Will Be Heard as a Concert Violinist on His Second Tour This Season. (See Page 2)

rector, who with Mr. Bok are signatories of a trust agreement that reposes in the vaults of the Orchestra Association in the Pennsylvania Building. These two men were the only participants in the secret, not even Dr. Leopold Stokowski, conductor, Arthur Judson, business manager, Andrew Wheeler, secretary, or any other official or director of the organization having an inkling as to the identity of the benefactor who was solving the financial problem of the organization.

Mr. Bok uses the third person, impersonal style utilized by Henry Adams in his "Autobiography." He says in part: "The public support given orchestras greatly interested Mr. Bok. He was surprised to find that every symphony orchestra had an annual deficit. This he immediately attributed to faulty management. But in investigating the whole question he learned that a symphony orchestra could not possibly operate at a profit or on a self-sustaining basis because of the change of programs, the incessant rehearsals required, and the limited number of times it could actually play within a contracted season. An annual deficit was inevitable.

"As already stated he did not think

the system in vogue of having a small group defray the annual deficit was a sound business policy. It made the Orchestra a necessarily exclusive organization, maintained by a few, and it gave out this impression to the general public, which felt that it did not belong, whereas the true relation of public and orchestra was that of mutual dependence. The plans of financing the Boston and New York Philharmonic he thought even a worse system, since it excluded the general public, making the orchestra dependent on the continued interest and life of a single individual. This does not in any way depreciate the fine generosity of the magnanimous donors who have supported these great organizations, but the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Bok are revealed in what has happened in the case of the Boston Symphony, owing first to the Muck episode and then to Major Higginson's death.

"Public participation and popular sharing in the maintenance was therefore the keynote of Mr. Bok's idea for a great community organization devoted to the highest in music. But it needed

[Continued on page 2]

\$2,000,000 RAISED TO PRODUCE OPERA IN SAN FRANCISCO

Polacco Announces Details of Ambitious Project of Which He Is to Be the Artistic Director—Company Designed to Rank with Those of New York and Chicago—Drive Now in Progress to Raise Remaining \$500,000 of Entire Sum Desired

CHICAGO, Sept. 7.—A project, the importance of which to the musical world of America it is impossible to estimate, has recently been made public by Giorgio Polacco, who returned this week to Chicago from a trip to San Francisco. It is the establishment in San Francisco of an opera company of major dimensions, to rank with the two great operatic organizations already existing in this country and with any in Europe.

Mr. Polacco, who will be general artistic director, held numerous conferences with leading financiers and persons prominent in the musical world of San Francisco, and reports not only the greatest enthusiasm over the project, but, which is more to the point, a tremendous financial backing already available with the balance in sight.

It is planned to build an opera house in which not only the comfort of the audience and the performers will be looked after to the last detail, but also the artistic beauty of the architectural and decorative features. These will be carefully taken care of by prominent authorities in these matters, and most of all, the technical equipment of the stage, lighting and the entire mechanism will be up to date in every sense of the word.

The amount required has been placed at \$2,500,000, of which \$2,000,000 has already been subscribed. The promoters are now engaged on a drive to raise the remaining \$500,000. The entire sum is to be used to erect the building and assemble equipment. The orchestra will be the very best which it is possible to bring together, both in size and quality, and no amount of care and expense will be spared in assembling the singing personnel of the company. As soon as the remaining sum has been subscribed, further details will be announced.

M. McL.

Incoming Liners Bring Back Prominent Operatic Folk

The incoming liners from Europe are beginning to bring back to this country the prominent members of the operatic world. On Sept. 3, the S. S. Giuseppe Verdi from Genoa and Palermo, sailed into New York harbor with Giulio Setti, chorus master of the Metropolitan and forty of the members of the chorus who spent their summer in Italy. On Sept. 7, the S. S. Presidente Wilson brought W. J. Guard, publicity director of the Metropolitan. Mr. Guard, shortly before sailing from Italy, saw Giulio Gatticasazza and his wife, Frances Alda, who are summering at the Lido near Venice. Mary Garden was also at the same resort and the two prima donnas gave a concert for Venetian charities. Mr. Gatti, according to Mr. Guard, will sail for this side on Oct. 10, and Mme. Alda will precede him by nearly a month, sailing on Sept. 18.